Mr. Waldo, from the Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, made the following report:

The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions, to whom was referred the petition of Devereux D. Bartlett, of Marblehead, Massachusetts, respectfully report:

The petitioner claims to be the son of William Bartlett, late of said Marblehead, deceased; that said William took a very active part in the war of the Revolution; was a sergeant, at the siege of Boston, for about eight months; was a member of the seacoast guards from February to November, 1776—a period of nine months; and was in the naval service as a gunner, and also as a privateer, during the war, in which several positions he was engaged in several hard-fought battles, and was severely wounded; and that he deceased more than forty years ago; that the widow of said William applied for, and obtained, a pension for his services, under the act of July 4, 1836, which was subsequently increased to the sum of seventy-five dollars and thirty-seven cents per annum, and continued to the day of her death, being the first day of April, 1838; and the petitioner asks Congress to allow him and the other children of said William "such further increase of pension as shall be just and reasonable in the premises," on account of the said services of their said father.

This is an application, by the children of a deceased revolutionary soldier, for pecuniary aid, founded upon the meritorious services of their ancestor. It is only one of a numerous class that has been considered by the committee during the present Congress, and has received, uniformly, an adverse report. These applications have been encouraged by an occasional departure from well settled principles, and a total disregard of well-established precedents, in giving gratuities to the children and grandchildren of revolutionary soldiers. But the committee have never recognised the justice or propriety of these acts, and have invariably insisted that the full measure of a nation’s gratitude ceased with the soldier himself; or, at most, with the partner of his privations and sufferings. Should the descendants of all who participated in the revolutionary struggle become pensioners upon our government, the list of pensioners would exceed the revolutionary army itself; and the entire revenue would be absorbed in discharging their annual claims. A general law producing this result would meet with but little favor, and the committee cannot undertake the invidious task to discriminate between claims of apparent equal merit, but
would leave each to be provided for by general and equal laws. The committee hold the memories of all who lived and acted in those perilous times in profound reverence, but cannot testify their respect by giving their descendants pecuniary aid; and as this application has no other merits, the committee recommend that the prayer thereof be denied.